

Frequently Asked Questions

If you have questions about our office or the services provided, you may find the answers here. Click a question to view the answer. If your answer is not found here, feel free to email this office at john.blevins@ncmail.net, call this office at 336-372-2411, or drop by our office at 182 Doctors Street, Sparta, NC.

[GENERAL QUESTIONS](#)

[INCOME MAINTENANCE](#)

[CHILDREN'S SERVICES](#)

[ADULT SERVICES](#)

[CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT](#)

[CHILD CARE](#)

GENERAL QUESTIONS

[\(Return to Questions Categories\)](#)

[Are Social Services and Social Security the same agency?](#)

[Are Medicare and Medicaid the same program?](#)

[Does DSS help with rent/housing?](#)

[Where can I get help with food?](#)

[Where can I get help to pay my heating or cooling bills?](#)

[Where do I get help paying for medication?](#)

[Where do I go to talk to someone about Social Security and Medicare?](#)

[Where do I apply for work permits?](#)

[How old must you be to have a workers permit?](#)

[If you live in one county and work in another who issues the work permit?](#)

[Where do I get help with clothing or household goods?](#)

[Is there help available for the blind?](#)

[Who helps elderly people in their homes with housekeeping and personal care?](#)

[Is there an adult day care program to help care for an elderly person while the family works or to provide a respite for caregivers?](#)

[Who am I?](#)

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Are Social Services and Social Security the same agency?

No. Social Services is a county agency administering income maintenance, Medicaid and social work programs. Social Security is a federal agency administering disability, SSI and Medicare benefits. The local Social Security office is in Wilkesboro, NC. Their toll-free number is 1-877-880-8506.

[\(Return to GENERAL QUESTIONS Questions\)](#)

Are Medicare and Medicaid the same program?

No. Medicare is a health insurance program for all citizens over age 65 without regard to income. Medicaid is a health insurance program for low income children and adults.

[\(Return to GENERAL QUESTIONS Questions\)](#)

Does DSS help with rent/housing?

No. Housing assistance is handled through HUD (336-372-5256).

[\(Return to GENERAL QUESTIONS Questions\)](#)

Where can I get help with food?

Solid Rock Ministries is the local food closet. They can be reached at 336-372-6560. The Department of Social Services administers the Food Stamp Program. You can apply at DSS for the Food Stamp Program.

[\(Return to GENERAL QUESTIONS Questions\)](#)

Where can I get help to pay my heating or cooling bills?

DSS offers a Crisis Intervention Program and the Low Income Energy Assistance Program to help with heating and cooling crises. Contact DSS at 336-372-2411 for more information. Additional resources include the Solid Rock Ministries (336-372-5959) administered through Alleghany Cares.

[\(Return to GENERAL QUESTIONS Questions\)](#)

Where do I get help paying for medication?

DSS offers medical assistance through the Medicaid program. For those not eligible for Medicaid, a Mobile Pharmacy comes to the county on a regular basis. Call Allegheny Cares at 336-372-5959 for information.

[\(Return to GENERAL QUESTIONS Questions\)](#)

Where do I go to talk to someone about Social Security and Medicare?

The Social Security Administration sends a representative to the Allegheny County Council on Aging on the second Thursday of each month. They can be reached by phone at 336-667-8507 or 1-800-772-1213.

[\(Return to GENERAL QUESTIONS Questions\)](#)

Where do I apply for work permits?

Applications can be obtained at DSS or at the Department of Labor website. You can also download an application on the Downloadable Forms page of this website.

[\(Return to GENERAL QUESTIONS Questions\)](#)

How old must you be to have a workers permit?

Anyone under the age of 18 must have a workers permit.

[\(Return to GENERAL QUESTIONS Questions\)](#)

If you live in one county and work in another who issues the work permit?

The county that you will be working in has to issue the work permit.

[\(Return to GENERAL QUESTIONS Questions\)](#)

Where do I get help with clothing or household goods?

Alleghany Cares (336-372-5959) and Cora's Charities (336-372-6545) offer help in these areas.

[\(Return to GENERAL QUESTIONS Questions\)](#)

Is there help available for the blind?

The Social Worker for the Blind has office hours at DSS on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. The worker can be reached at 336-372-1445 or 336-651-7490.

[\(Return to GENERAL QUESTIONS Questions\)](#)

Who helps elderly people in their homes with housekeeping and personal care?

The Alleghany County Council on Aging (336-372-4640) and Alleghany Health Department (336-372-5641) provide programs that assist elderly residents in their homes. Contact either of these agencies or DSS for information and eligibility questions.

[\(Return to GENERAL QUESTIONS Questions\)](#)

Is there an adult day care program to help care for an elderly person while the family works or to provide a respite for caregivers?

Currently there is no adult day care in Alleghany County.

[\(Return to GENERAL QUESTIONS Questions\)](#)

Who am I?

I am the dept of Social Services

[\(Return to GENERAL QUESTIONS Questions\)](#)

INCOME MAINTENANCE

[\(Return to Questions Categories\)](#)

[How do I apply for Medicaid or North Carolina Health Choice for my children?](#)

[How long will it take me to get Medicaid, North Carolina Health Choice, or Work First after I have applied if I am eligible?](#)

[Who is eligible for North Carolina Health Choice?](#)

[When will I receive my food stamp benefits if I am eligible?](#)

[How do you determine the day my food stamp benefits are available?](#)

[When can I apply for the Low Income Energy Assistance Program?](#)

INCOME MAINTENANCE

How do I apply for Medicaid or North Carolina Health Choice for my children?

You can come to your local DSS or DSS can mail an application to you to complete and return to DSS. Applications can also be picked up at the local Alleghany Health Department.

Applications are also available online at www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dma/cpcont.htm.

[\(Return to INCOME MAINTENANCE Questions\)](#)

How long will it take me to get Medicaid, North Carolina Health Choice, or Work First after I have applied if I am eligible?

Caseworkers have 45 days to determine eligibility for most Medicaid programs; this includes North Carolina Health Choice. Medicaid for the disabled processing time is 90 days.

[\(Return to INCOME MAINTENANCE Questions\)](#)

Who is eligible for North Carolina Health Choice?

NCHC is for children under 19 only. These children must not be covered by any comprehensive health insurance and must meet current income guidelines.

[\(Return to INCOME MAINTENANCE Questions\)](#)

When will I receive my food stamp benefits if I am eligible?

Normal processing time for caseworkers is 30 days. If caseworker determines application is emergency, it will be processed within 7 days.

[\(Return to INCOME MAINTENANCE Questions\)](#)

How do you determine the day my food stamp benefits are available?

The last digit of your Social Security number determines it.

[\(Return to INCOME MAINTENANCE Questions\)](#)

When can I apply for the Low Income Energy Assistance Program?

The local DSS takes these applications during the first two weeks in November. Please contact your local DSS.

[\(Return to INCOME MAINTENANCE Questions\)](#)

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

[\(Return to Questions Categories\)](#)

[How do I apply for Social Security Disability or SSI?](#)

[How do I report a child being mistreated?](#)

[How can I become a foster parent?](#)

[What do I need to do if I want to adopt a child?](#)

[How do I get custody of my children?](#)

[What age can children be left home alone?](#)

[Does DSS have car seats to give away?](#)

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

How do I apply for Social Security Disability or SSI?

Contact your local Social Security office in Wilkesboro, NC. Their toll-free number is 1-877-880-8506.

[\(Return to CHILDREN'S SERVICES Questions\)](#)

How do I report a child being mistreated?

If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected you must contact the Department of Social Services. This can be done by calling or visiting the office during normal working hours or, in the case of an emergency, by calling 911 on nights, weekends or holidays.

[\(Return to CHILDREN'S SERVICES Questions\)](#)

How can I become a foster parent?

Contact the foster home licensing worker at DSS by calling or coming by the agency. The worker will explain the licensing process and give the family a copy of the Foster Home Licensing Handbook. This handbook explains the licensing process including the requirements and procedure for licensing.

[\(Return to CHILDREN'S SERVICES Questions\)](#)

What do I need to do if I want to adopt a child?

Contact DSS to schedule an office visit with the adoption worker who will explain the process and give the family the Adoption Handbook with information on the Adoption process.

[\(Return to CHILDREN'S SERVICES Questions\)](#)

How do I get custody of my children?

DSS does not determine custody issues. Custody is ONLY awarded through the court system. You must contact an attorney for custody issues.

[\(Return to CHILDREN'S SERVICES Questions\)](#)

What age can children be left home alone?

The laws of North Carolina do not specify an age that it is "legal" to leave a child home alone. The decision should be based on many factors. For information and advice, contact DSS.

[\(Return to CHILDREN'S SERVICES Questions\)](#)

Does DSS have car seats to give away?

No. Car seats can be obtained at the Alleghany County Health Department.

[\(Return to CHILDREN'S SERVICES Questions\)](#)

ADULT SERVICES

[\(Return to Questions Categories\)](#)

[How do I report abuse or neglect of an elderly person?](#)

[Who do I call for help with transportation?](#)

[How can I get home delivered meals?](#)

[How do I get Power of Attorney or Guardianship of an elderly relative?](#)

ADULT SERVICES

How do I report abuse or neglect of an elderly person?

Reports can be made to DSS during working hours, or in the case of an emergency on nights or weekends through 911.

[\(Return to ADULT SERVICES Questions\)](#)

Who do I call for help with transportation?

Allegheny In Motion (AIM) is the transportation authority for Allegheny County. They can be reached at 336-372-8747 (TRIP).

[\(Return to ADULT SERVICES Questions\)](#)

How can I get home delivered meals?

Allegheny County Council on Aging provides a nutrition program on site as well as home delivered meals. For either of these programs contact the Council on Aging (336-372-4640).

[\(Return to ADULT SERVICES Questions\)](#)

How do I get Power of Attorney or Guardianship of an elderly relative?

For the appropriate forms for these issues you must contact the Clerk of Superior Court (336-372-8949). You may contact DSS for information and you should consult an attorney.

[\(Return to ADULT SERVICES Questions\)](#)

CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT

[\(Return to Questions Categories\)](#)

[Can I receive child support if the father of my children is living in another state?](#)

[Does the father of my children have the right to see our children if he pays child support?](#)

[From the time that I apply for child support, how long will it be before I start receiving?](#)

[What can be done if paternity is an issue?](#)

[How do you determine the amount of child support I will be receiving?](#)

CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT

Can I receive child support if the father of my children is living in another state?

Yes, the current situation will be assessed and the case will be worked accordingly.

[\(Return to CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT Questions\)](#)

Does the father of my children have the right to see our children if he pays child support?

The father does have the right to see his children, however child support and child custody/visitation are two separate issues and the father will have to address visitation on his own.

[\(Return to CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT Questions\)](#)

From the time that I apply for child support, how long will it be before I start receiving?

The time varies and it depends on your current situation and if paternity has been established.

[\(Return to CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT Questions\)](#)

What can be done if paternity is an issue?

A DNA test will be done on the mother, child, and alleged father.

[\(Return to CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT Questions\)](#)

How do you determine the amount of child support I will be receiving?

The amount of child support is calculated by using the North Carolina Child Support Guidelines.

[\(Return to CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT Questions\)](#)

CHILD CARE

[\(Return to Questions Categories\)](#)

[Is there a program to help families pay for child care? If so how do I apply?](#)

[What do I need to do to become a licensed child care provider?](#)

[Who are the child care providers in Alleghany County?](#)

[Who do I call to make a complaint about a day care?](#)

[Are there child care providers who provide night and weekend care?](#)

CHILD CARE

Is there a program to help families pay for child care? If so how do I apply?

The Child Care Subsidy Program is an assistance program to help low income families with child care costs. Eligibility is based on need and income. Contact DSS to apply for this service.

[\(Return to CHILD CARE Questions\)](#)

What do I need to do to become a licensed child care provider?

Child Care licensing is handled through the division of Child Development. Locally, information about licensing can be obtained from the Child Care Resource and Referral worker at the Allegheny Partnership for Children (336-372-2846)

[\(Return to CHILD CARE Questions\)](#)

Who are the child care providers in Allegheny County?

DSS maintains a current list of child care providers that accept subsidy payments. The Allegheny Partnership (mentioned above) can provide a list of all licensed child care providers in the county including the provider's star rating (quality of care rating).

[\(Return to CHILD CARE Questions\)](#)

Who do I call to make a complaint about a day care?

Call the division of Child development complaint department at 1-800-859-0829 (fax: 919-773-2838).

[\(Return to CHILD CARE Questions\)](#)

Are there child care providers who provide night and weekend care?

Second and third shift care is provided by a limited number of child care providers. Weekend care is currently not available. Contact the Allegheny County Partnership for Children (336-372-2846) to inquire about hours of individual child care provider.

[\(Return to CHILD CARE Questions\)](#)